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Hall Bookings:

All Saints' Parish Rooms: Trish Dean Tel: 07763295495 (Texts preferred)
email: allsntshall@gmail.com

St Mary's Church Hall: Mrs Diana Fleming Tel: 01275 875081

The Parish Office, The Rectory Tel: 873257. The office is normally open 9 am - 1 pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. Phone messages and emails will be checked daily.
eastclevedon04@outlook.com; www.eastclevedonchurches.co.uk

CHURCHWARDENS

All Saints' East Mrs Kay Osborne, 2 Seymour Close BS21 6DU (342013)
Clevedon with St Michael's, Mrs Monica Gore, 4 Plumers Close, BS21 5AW
Clapton in Gordano (791764)

St Mary's Walton Mr Paul Middleton, 8 Edgehill Road, BS21 7BZ (341908)
Mrs Diana Fleming, Flat 5, 29 Edgehill Road, BS21 7BZ
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St Paul's Mrs Sue Betts, 1 Kings Road, Portishead, BS20 8HH (848645)
Walton in Gordano

St Peter & St Paul Mr John Bridges, The Bellows, Clevedon Road, Weston in
Weston in Gordano BS20 8PU (843380)

Website: www.eastclevedonchurches.co.uk

Facebook pages : All Saints East Clevedon Church; St Marys Clevedon;

St Pauls Church Walton in Gordano; St Peter and St Paul's Church, Weston in Gordano

The Parish Magazine

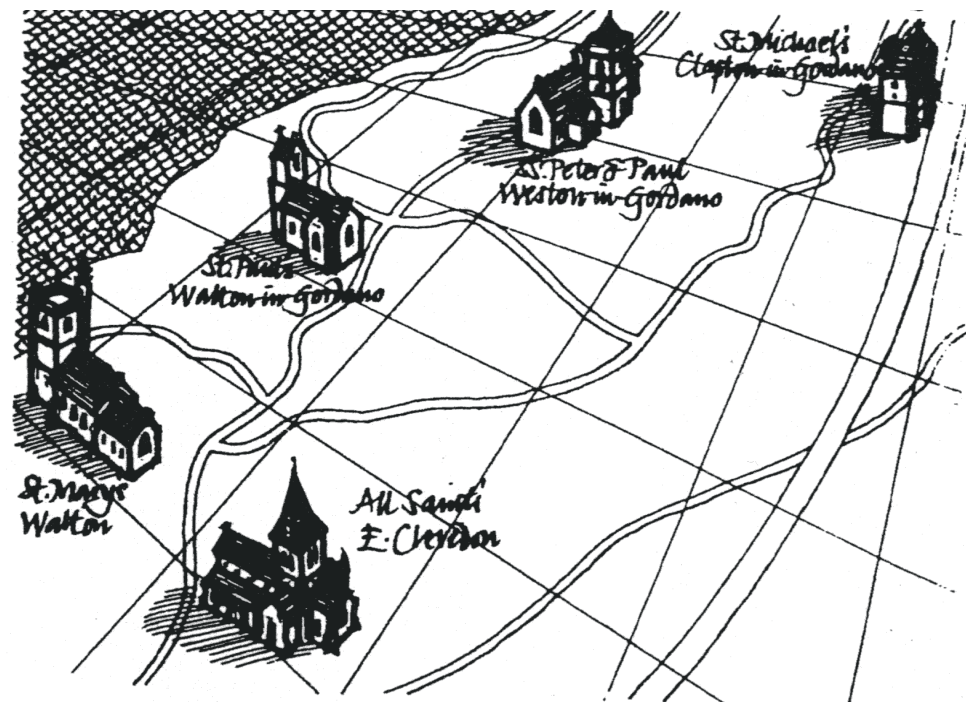
Diocese of Bath and Wells

THE UNITED BENEFICE OF EAST CLEVEDON

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Parish Office:

Tel: 01275 873257 email: eastclevedon04@outlook.com



January 2024 £1

SERVICES

All Saints', East Clevedon	Sundays	8.00 am Holy Communion 10.30 am All Age Service (1st) Holy Communion (2nd, 3rd, 4th)
Walton St Mary Clevedon	Sundays	10.00 am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd, 5th) 10.00am Morning Prayer (2nd, 4th)
	Wednesdays	10.00 am Holy Communion
St Paul's, Walton	Sundays	11.15 am Sunday Worship
St Peter & St Paul, Weston in Gordano	Sundays	10.00am Morning Prayer (1st) 5.00 pm Choral Evensong (2nd & 4th) 5.00pm Holy Communion (3rd, 5th)

WEEKLY BENEFICE UPDATE

Please contact the parish office if you would like to receive a weekly email with Readings, Prayers and Notices for the week.

If you do not have internet access please contact the parish office and we will make hard copies available for you.

Please also see www.eastclevedonchurches.co.uk for copies of Morning and Evening Prayer and the current edition of the parish magazine.

PARISH OFFICE OPENING TIMES: The Parish Office will be open on Tuesday and Friday mornings, 9.00am - 1.00pm although emails and phone calls will be answered on a daily and very regular basis. You are welcome to come to the Office on the mornings it is open or otherwise by arrangement.

MAGAZINE DETAILS

Magazine & Advertising editor: Laura Durrant
Mobile: 07890113851

Email: Laura.EastClevedonChurches@gmail.com

The deadline for copy for the February magazine is Monday January 15th and the magazine will be in church by Sunday February 4th.

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FIRST WORD from The Rev'd Tim Daplyn

Is Making New Year Resolutions Justified?

By and large, the Christian Church does not make much of New Year. Quite frankly, we have resigned it to secular festivities and some decidedly un-churchy activities! For ever, it would seem, mid-winter has included a period of seasonal merry-making for people all around the world. In ancient times, the passing of the longest night heralded the riotous and pagan festival of Saturnalia (17-23 December). Following soon after, the Roman New Year began on 1st January and was quickly adopted as a time of new beginnings.

Having lived and ministered in Scotland, I soon learned the social and political importance of New Year North of the border. "Have a Happy Christmas!" I wished Kenny (Butcher, Postman, Shepherd and Congregational Church Elder) with my Sassenach (Incomer) enthusiasm. Kenny eyed me quizzically before venturing a very deliberate: "Aye, and I'll have a better Hogmanay!"

Which brings me to justifying the custom of New Year's Resolutions... I am sure that all of us have started to compose a letter or an email and then, after a few sentences, looked at what we've written and muttered, 'That's not what I wanted to say at all!' So we've deleted it, started again, and had a second go. On occasions, also, I suspect that we may have wished that we could do exactly the same with life itself and make a new beginning.

I feel that New Year's resolutions do help us to do just that. Of course, a lot of our good intentions are either broken, or forgotten, by the end of January. We either don't like the discipline of having to keep them or else we tell ourselves that we never really intended to keep them in the first place. Making resolutions, without a real desire on our part to maintain them, can be a futile practise whatever time of year they are made.

Don't think however that the New Year isn't an opportunity to begin again. It is, and for 4 reasons. Firstly, it is a time for thanksgiving, a time to remember that it is not by chance alone that we have been spared, sustained and brought safely to start another year. We can give thanks for what we still have of our health and strength. Thanks that, for some of our silliest mistakes, we have not been asked to suffer the full consequences. Or, thanks that many of the crises we most dreaded a year ago have either been averted or else resolved. So, we can pause at the turning of the year and give heartfelt thanks.

Secondly, The New Year is a time for repentance. This can have a negative side meaning remorse for our past. But it can also have a positive side meaning resolution for the future. Remorse and resolution do go hand-in-hand. What the Bible means by repentance is turning away from the mistakes of the past and turning towards the future, which God has given us, resolved to make a fresh and better start.

Thirdly, New Year is a time of hope. A time to discard depression, discouragement and defeatism like old and worn-out clothes, a time to put on new garments of enthusiasm and confidence.

Lastly, New Year is, supremely, a time for decision. As we pilgrimage through life we will find some well-worn paths of those who have gone before us in Faith and Hope and Love. We can ignore these, and do so at our own peril, wandering into dangerous and difficult paths of our own devising. There we will find out, the hard way, that life becomes futile again.

If we make New Year a time when we're determined to start life all over again, surrendering ourselves in faith to Christ, our Lord and Saviour, then all our resolutions are justified both in the making and the keeping.

Tim

From January 2024 the Parish magazine will rise to £1.00 for an individual copy (currently 50p) but just £10.00 for an annual subscription. The Parish magazine has gone up by only 10p in twenty years and the increase in price will ensure that the magazine pays for itself and can continue into future years.

For payment details please refer to page 29. If you wish to pay by cash or cheque please give this to the person who delivers your magazine or pay by cash in church for individual magazines.

Subscriptions and donations

From January 2024 the Parish magazine will be £1.00 for an individual copy but just £10.00 for an annual subscription.

For magazine subscriptions and other donations to our churches please use the following details. General donations to the United Benefice can be made using the bank details provided.

All Saints Church

Cheques payable to 'PCC All Saints, Clevedon'

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Sort code: 30-18-88

St Mary's Church

Cheques payable to 'St Mary's PCC'

A/c no: 15061094

Sort code: 52-21-39

St Peter and St Paul's Church

Cheques payable to 'St Peter and St Paul Weston-in-Gordano PCC'

A/c no: 03009475

Sort code: 54-30-06

St Paul's Church

Cheques payable to 'St Paul's PCC'

A/c no: 01125400

Sort code: 40-37-33

United Benefice Account

Cheques payable to 'East Clevedon UB'

'East Clevedon United Benefice'

A/c no: 00334855

Sort code: 52-21-39

Pause for Thought

Bethlehem

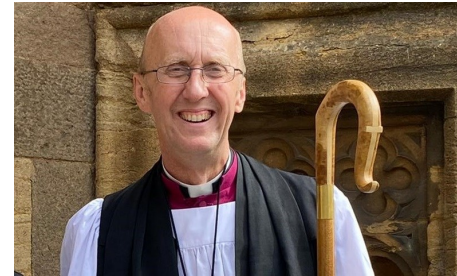
Pray for the city of Bethlehem
The city where
under the silent stars
the hopes and fears
of all the years are met;

Bethlehem
Still silent at night,
its people under curfew now,
hemmed in,
afraid;

Bethlehem
Where,
O God,
as a helpless infant
threatened by violence
you clung to life;

Bethlehem
City of fear,
where the world's salvation
dawned
in a child's cry;

O God
have mercy
upon the children of Bethlehem;
And there,
once again,
let hope be cradled.
Amen.



LETTER FROM THE BISHOP

Hope in deed

I'd love to be writing a sunny New Year's article reflecting a boundless global optimism about the future. Yet the reality is very different. War in Ukraine drags on and tensions in the Middle East remain dangerous. The cost-of-living crisis continues and many are finding things tough. Pessimism rather than optimism is the order of our day.

In such circumstances, where can hope be found? For Christians, confidence and assurance rest in the promise of the future that God has in store for us. In the Bible God says: 'See, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end' (Revelation 21: 5-6). Christian hope is that whatever may be happening to us now, God has a very different and favourable future in store for us.

Critically, the point of such hope is not just to enable us to say 'Well don't worry about present circumstances. It's all going to be all right eventually.' Hope's purpose is to shape how we live and what we do now. It's to enable us to live out the words of the old Christian Aid poster that said, 'We believe in life before death'.

Towards the end of last year, I had the privilege of visiting a number of the deaneries of our diocese. On those visits I heard at first-hand how through the work of our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, Christian hope translates into practical action for good amongst the everyday lives of local communities. We are offering debt counselling and food banks, support for families and care of the lonely and isolated. All these and many more were amazing examples of how we can join with God to 'make all things new' right here, right now.

So, as we start a new year, please can I encourage us all not to stare into our glasses, lamenting their being half full? Rather, through how we live and what we do, let us fill them with the new wine of God's kingdom – overflowing to the brim. For that is hope in deed.

Bishop Michael

READINGS AND PRAYERS

Sunday, 7th January - Epiphany

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Matthew 2: 1-12

O God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek: may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light discern the glory of your presence in your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday 14th January – Epiphany 2

1 Samuel 3: 1-10 John 1: 43-end

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

God of glory, you nourish us with your Word who is the bread of life: fill us with your Holy Spirit that through us the light of your glory may shine in all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday, 21st January – Epiphany 3

Genesis 14: 17-20 John 2: 1-11

Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles the wonder of your saving presence: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your mighty power; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

St Peter & St Paul, Weston in Gordano

7th 10.00 am Morning Prayer - Michael Dyne

14th 5.00 pm Evensong - The Rector
Michael Dyne

21st 5.00pm Holy Communion - The Rev'd Nicholas Maddock

28th 5.00pm Evensong - The Rector
Sister Carol

Wednesday 11am Holy Communion service suspended until Spring. Please join St Mary's 10am service.

Walton St Mary, Clevedon

7th 10.00 am Holy Communion - The Rev'd Nicholas Maddock

14th 10.00 am Morning Prayer - The Rector

21st 10.00 am Holy Communion - The Rev'd Nicholas Maddock

28th 10.00 am Morning Prayer - The Rector
Michael Dyne

Every Wednesday 10.00 am Holy Communion at St Mary's

January SERVICES

Correct on going to press - please check with the parish office or
www.eastclevedonchurches.co.uk

All Saints, East Clevedon

7th	8.00 am	Holy Communion - The Rector
	10.30 am	All Age Communion - The Rector
14th	8.00 am	Holy Communion - The Rector
	10.30 am	Holy Communion - The Rev'd Ian Hubbard Michael Dyne
21st	8.00am	Holy Communion - The Rector
	10.30am	Holy Communion - The Rector Michael Dyne
28th	8.00am	Holy Communion - The Rev'd Tim Daplyn
	10.30 am	Holy Communion - The Rev'd Tim Daplyn

St Paul's, Walton in Gordano

7th	11.15 am	Morning Prayer - Sue Betts Graham Roberts
14th	11.15 am	Holy Communion - The Rector
21st	11.15 am	Morning Prayer - Joshua Angle
28th	11.15 am	Morning Prayer - The Rector

Sunday, 28th January – The Presentation of Christ (Candlemas)

Malachi 3: 15

Luke 2: 22-40

God our creator, who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people, and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Taking action for good

Christian communities across Bath and Wells support the neighbourhoods they serve in a host of different ways – from the more traditional support for initiatives such as community fridges and foodbanks that address food poverty, to walking alongside their community and fostering community growth in more unexpected places like football clubs and workplaces.

In Bath, individual churches from different denominations have come together in a new network facilitated by the Genesis Trust, recognising that by linking their community hubs they can collectively offer 'good help' to individuals and families in every part of the city.

We may live in challenging times, but there are Christian communities - in churches, in workplaces and in schools - who are taking action for good. Could you join in where you are?

Find other stories of church communities in action at bathandwells.org.uk/news.

ALL SAINTS THEN AND NOW

from the archives

Our Church Ringers will be authorized to make their customary appeal to the generosity of old friends at Christmas, and I am very glad to say that we have a set of ringers who pull together outside as well as inside the belfry, and keep regularly up to their work. They are also bent on mastering change-ringing, which will give additional variety to their performances, receiving kind help in the matter from C.H. Shearn, of Midsomer Norton, who is tremendously keen on the subject of bells and has written a very useful pamphlet treating of "Grandsire Doubles" and other mysterious combinations. *East Clevedon Parish Monthly, January 1904.*

*On doing a quick runaround the internet I discovered that Charles H. Stearn was a 'Cycle Agent' aged about 30 in 1904. On 22nd April 1900 he was part of a team at Midsomer Norton Parish Church which rang a quarter-peal (1,260) of Grandsire Triples which lasted for forty-five minutes. Stearns was on No. 7 bell. Alas, not a sign of his pamphlet in any known library otherwise I'd have bought it! Still, he was clearly an excellent tutor for the All Saints' bell ringers.

Julia Elton

ALL SAINTS, East Clevedon



We started December with the family service on 3rd December led by Fr Tim. Churchwarden Monica had been asked to tell us about her favourite hymn, which was 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow'. Monica's family lived in Walton Road and worshipped at All Saints. She told us her earliest memory of the

hymn was in assembly at All Saints School and remembered a Christmas at school when Santa arrived looking distinctly like her brother Colin! Her mum, a dinner lady at the time, realized she'd recognized her brother and put her finger to her mouth to 'shush' Monica. Instead of Sunday School, she attended St Michael's Guild, which met in the vestry and was led by Miss Violet Johnson. Each year they went to Glastonbury Pilgrimage, an open air service in the grounds of the ruined abbey. Monica remembered travelling in a coach (probably Wems) with other members of the congregation, then carrying banners through the streets of Glastonbury, these were happy occasions. But Monica said she had experienced 'Nights of doubt and sorrow' in her life. The second verse of the hymn really resonates with her 'clear before us through the darkness, gleams and burns the hand of brother, stepping fearless through the night'. Monica felt she was starting to see the light at her first service back at All Saints in 1998 having been made so welcome by clergy and congregation. Soon after that she became very dear friends

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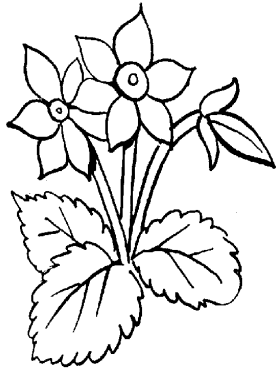
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Garden Talk

In the dark days of December I said that this month I would offer a few suggestions about how to make a small garden appear bigger. Of course, a small garden has charms of its own: it is intimate, private and sheltered so you may be quite happy with that. Or your garden may be quite big enough already and you have no wish to make it seem larger. If, however, you have only a modest sized garden and would like to make the most of it, here are a few ideas.

Conceal the boundaries. If your garden is enclosed by very visible fences you can feel like a beetle in a box. The trick is to disguise the boundaries by growing shrubs against them or letting a climber wander all over them. The sections of fencing which remain visible can be painted dark brown or even matt black so they fade into the background. We once moved into a house where the fences had been painted bright orange! They were the first thing you noticed on entering the garden, no matter how lovely the flowers were. If the eye is drawn to the garden itself, and not the boundaries, it will seem much bigger.

Divide the garden into sections. This may sound silly but by dividing a garden into a number of 'rooms' it can seem larger and more interesting. This is especially so if you can only see a little bit of one area from another. Create a sense of mystery. Our garden in Clevedon is only about 45 feet wide and long but we have divided it into three sections: a small, square patio beside the house, a flower garden with a small lawn, and a vegetable garden designed on permaculture lines. A picket fence divides the flower garden from Sally's vegetable area so not much is visible from the other side. By not seeing the whole garden from any one point it seems bigger than it actually is.

Have a focal point. Finally, a feature such as an ornamental tree, a fountain, a statue or a pergola, leads the eye to the garden rather than the boundary. A curved path is preferable to a straight one for the same reason and a mirror can give the illusion of more space. Garden design is ultimately a matter of personal taste and January is a good time to decide what you would like your little piece of Somerset to look like in 2024.

William King

with long time church member, Win Thomas, who was a resident in a care home where Monica worked. Win told her the hymn was also one of her favourites. Another reason it is special to Monica. Thank you, Monica, for sharing your story with us, it was a privilege to hear it. The Christmas folk concert was brilliant as always. Noel welcomed everyone with an amusing reading about how some people viewed Morris Dancing in days gone by – not very highly! We also enjoyed Hilary Hagan reading 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' a different, and funny, take on the song. A special mention must be made of the David and Goliath sketch, with Geoff King, Steve Parfitt and Anne Brock, which had us all laughing. Also to Chris Blackman, All Saints bell ringer and clock maintenance person, who performed a Morris Dance in the central aisle – I suspect he was press ganged into it – but we all enjoyed watching. We were treated to some beautiful songs and carols sung by members of the group, plus ones where the congregation joined in. Thank you also to everyone who provided the refreshments, not least Anne and Richard Pring's legendary mulled wine. I can't wait till next year!

We enjoyed the December Coffee Morning. Thank you to Susan for bringing the mince pies, to Margaret for doing the hard work when I'm off chatting, and in fact all of you who get your own coffee/tea and do the washing up. Everyone pitches in and it's such a lovely friendly group – please join us if you're free on 10th January 10am in the vestry.

As we go to press we still have the art talk, carol service, crib festival and Christmas to look forward to, so more in the February magazine. The cost of the magazine is going up in January to £1 per edition or £10 for the year. The cost has been the same for years and I am sure you will understand the reason for the increase.

Sandra Sallis



ST MICHAEL'S, Clapton in Gordano

A pre event evening meeting of the contributors and organisers of the Special Winter concert at St Michaels for 9th December was convened to ensure any last minute details were not omitted. Come the day, the church had been cleaned, interior decorations installed, car parking at the Court for the audience settled. The programme of songs determined and rehearsed, with a full P.A. and lighting system set up by the ladies plus Daisy's family themselves.

Sue, Laura, Claire and Yvonne had arranged for new urns and an oven to heat up the supply of Gluhwein and mince pies plus a requisite number of cups, doilies etc for the interval's refreshments.

Phil Joyner kindly set up a full lighting stream, with power taken from the church to proved illumination from the bottom gate up the incline plus the now essential Portaloo.

And so on the night with last minute rehearsals complete, mulled wine and mince pies warming, car parking with Yvonne running a shuttle service from the Court to the church the audience started to arrive.

Unfortunately due to the rather inclement weather Sue informed us that a dozen or so folk could not make the event. Even so, around 70 brave souls did make their way through the high winds to attend.

With people travelling as far away as Gloucester and also including a Belgian/American couple living in Portishead who used their E Bikes to attend, the audience were finally seated.

The first act were the Sea Galls, a group of seven unaccompanied ladies performing traditional sea shanties from the distant past sea fairing days. Then a nervous Daisy dressed in a special Christmas dress took to the microphone. To perform in front of the audience took tremendous courage for her and full marks to treat us to a selection of festive songs. Laura was there to help her with the background music and second vocals. With the church lights dimmed, a bespoke multi coloured rotating light adding to the atmosphere. Laura then took over with a selection of her choice of festive songs.

Come the interval, volunteers helped to serve the extremely welcome heated Gluhwein with fruit and mince pies.

The lights were then again dimmed and with the audience refreshed for the second half, the Sea Galls opened with a further selection of sea shanties.

Afterwards a more confident Daisy performed a series of modern songs again with Laura setting up the instrumental backing and accompanying her.

For the final performance Laura took the audience through some great classic songs from the 50s, a Ray Charles rocker, to the present. The 70s favourite ABBA's 'Dancing Queen' couldn't help but spur a goodly number into the isle, to move to the rhythm.

As a finale, Laura beautifully performed 'Sweet Caroline' with the audience joining in with the chorus to end our special concert with rousing send off. A fantastic evening's entertainment held in spite of the awful weather.

The Friends wish to thank everyone involved no matter how they contributed. It would take too long to name all individuals but I must highlight the performance by Daisy, who presented a sterling act in front of the audience. If she chooses to continue to perform then we wish her all the very best of luck. The net monies raised will help fund the future projects to keep St Michaels viably open for the local communities.

And finally..... I wish to add a note of appreciation to the unnamed people who built the church. Standing at the back by the court centre piece, I was able to fully appreciate the stunning acoustics the building reflects. With fully orchestrated and recorded backing tracks and the strong crystal clear vocals from all of the performers, St Michaels stands as a lasting tribute to those past workers, whose skills rival the best a modern, expensive hi fi system can reproduce.

Derek Roberts

FROM THE REGISTERS....

FUNERALS

5th December – Sandra Green, St Mary's

Bible verse of the month

If afraid.....

"God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him"

Psalm 46 v 1

Taken from The Message Bible 2003



You can find free Christian resources on the welcome tables at All Saints and St Mary's. Please help yourself.

ALL SAINTS FLOODLIGHTING

9 January

James, our wonderful grandson, is 18 today. We are so blessed to have him in our lives. Mo and Geoff King



If you would like to sponsor the floodlighting please email Sandra Sallis at allsaintspcc@gmail.com. Your dedication will be on the pewsheet, magazine and All Saints Facebook page.

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WALTON ST MARY

We held our Christmas Coffee morning on December 2nd, and I am happy to report that many people came along to support us. Mulled wine, coffee and mince pies were the order of the day, as the weather on that Saturday was the coldest since last

March. There were plenty of festive raffle prizes and every buyer went home with something! Most of the items on the "Bring and Buy" stall found new homes and we were able to raise over £300 for the church funds. Our thanks go to everyone who helped on the day and a special mention to Yvonne on her first day back with us after her successful hip operation.

Sandra Green's funeral took place at St Mary's on the 5th December. Her family and friends joined together to say their farewells before a final service at the crematorium.

The first of Nicholas Maddocks's Advent Meditations centred around the well-known hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel. An early version of this hymn was first sung in monasteries over 1,200 years ago. In 1851 John Mason Neale (1818-1866) an Anglican priest published a five-verse translation of the Latin version. We sang it to the plainsong tune "Veni Emmanuel" which dates from France in the 15th century.

The gate on Channel Road has now been repaired and put in place. We are very grateful to Terry Wynne and the Clevedon Men's Shed for doing such a splendid job.

This is also a good opportunity to thank everyone who contributes in whatever way to the successful running of St Mary's your help is invaluable as always. Forthcoming events include a concert arranged by Ian and Christopher for Saturday 27th January at 11.00am.

A Silent Auction in aid of the Well restoration with the date to be confirmed. Finally, by the time you read this, we will have begun a New Year. Let us hope and pray that we can look forward to a more peaceful, settled world for the good of all humanity.

Diana Fleming

St. Mary's Christmas flowers

Pulpit pedestal - in loving memory of Andrew James Blease, requested by his wife Rosemary June.

Welcome table - in loving memory of Bill Cox, requested with love from his wife Jeannie and family.



ST PETER & ST PAUL, Weston in Gordano

"We are heirs of a great mystery; God is made human and divinity is hidden in humanity, that humanity may be raised to divinity."

A new year begins in the Christian Calendar, with the 'Naming of Jesus', a positive way to start 2024. Christmas probably already seems over and done with but I must report on the proceeds of the pre Christmas Fayre which raised over £1,300 for the church. And I must tell of the Carol service on the 10th of last month.

This was the church at its best with an almost full house of a real mix of people from the village and beyond, familiar faces and not so familiar. It was good to experience. The home team had been at work and made the building look lovely with seasonal lights, which worked well as the service began in darkness, with voices off stage proclaiming the coming of Christ. The usual lighting came on in the choir stalls for the first and Advent Carol sung by the Choir. There was a substantial number of singers who were a pleasure to listen to, particularly in the two anthems.

As some times happens in liturgy, there were some hitches, which somehow .. in revealing our human vulnerability....can add unexpected richness to the occasion. The microphone was one of the hitches, causing difficulties. It requires some health and safety attention for future occasions.! But those well known carols were sung with considerable enthusiasm by all and I did feel that the spirit lifted us and there was a real sense of worship. A thank you to choir, to brave readers (it can be oddly unnerving, however confident and practised one might be, to stand and read before the gathered company.) Thank you to all who worked to enable a good celebration toward the wonderful mystery of Christmas. And a most particular thank you to all who came and played their part within the whole by simply being there and joining in.

In true Weston -in - Gordano style there were mulled wine and mince pies to follow and folk did not seem in a hurry to leave. How good it is when the Church can host these highlights in a year.

Magazine deadlines mean that Christmas reporting has to end there. I write from a village festooned with lights and with a large inflatable and rather endearing snowman moving about in the wind near the church. Lights are on over The White Hart pub too, as it is renovated for re- opening. Hurrah! The village seems to have come to life over the last year. The Church is a crucial part of that. And as we enter 2024 with its undeniable challenges and sorrows so we enter it too with the light of Christ who is greater than all darkness and with the assurance of God with us in all that lies ahead. We do not travel forward alone.

Sister Carol



The 3 C's - Coffee (cake!) and Conversation is a discussion group that takes place on the first Tuesday of the month from 1.30pm – 2.45pm at All Saints Vestry using "Day by Day with God" notes as the focus for discussion (notes available through the Parish Office) A relaxed and informal space to learn and encourage. We have had many interesting discussions over the months so if it's something you'd like to try out do join us or for more information please contact Kate Hector on 873257.

Next meetings are Tuesday 9th January and Tuesday 6th February. Tea, coffee and cake always provided!

BIBLE NOTES can be ordered through the Parish Office.

We currently order in "Day by Day with God" and "New Daylight" Bible notes. These provide bite-size Bible passages explained by those who themselves have found the Bible to be a source of strength and inspiration for life. The cost per edition is £4.75.

ALL SAINTS COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING

10am - 12 noon in All Saints Vestry

Second Wednesday in the month—next meetings

January 10th and February 14th

Just turn up or contact Sandra Sallis on 878848/07443905634

The following letter was submitted to The Church Times by The Rev'd Tim Daplyn following his Armistice Day Adventure to London.

Having inflicted my visage (Sunday Express front page 12th November) and personal views upon the general public via BBC News coverage of the Armistice Day Service of Remembrance at the National Cenotaph on Saturday 11th November, I crave the indulgence of the Letters Column to give just a little more of the story behind the story.

For me, as for many military veterans, Armistice and Remembrance Sunday is a tough time and particularly so in this year of wars and rumours of war. At the last minute, I made a decision to go up to London in order to keep a personal vigil for friends and family.

At Westminster Abbey I was able to place poppy crosses at the Field of Remembrance for military friends who did not survive their service. At the Cenotaph (in between unforeseen media interruptions and 'noises off' from Mr Robinson's Merry Men) I prayed for Peace and the deeper commitment of Shalom that is the duty of us all.

My objective in going to Hyde Park where the so-called 'Hate March' was gathering was two-fold: to actively support the cause of an immediate Armistice on Armistice Day; and also to visit the 7/7 Memorial where my niece, Liz, is remembered alongside the other victims of terrorist bombings on the London Transport system in 2005. There I was able to pray for Liz and also for Germaine Lindsay (Abdullah Shaheed Jamal) who was the young man who, in killing her, also destroyed himself.

The area around the 7/7 monument was a quiet(er) corner on a very noisy day (we older soldiers don't do loud noises very well) and I found families and children were using it for prayer, picnics and play before starting the walk. Liz, who spent some of her childhood in Pakistan (her late father was an agricultural economist), would have loved to see them and I'm sure she would have smiled, just as I did.

The unfettered laughter of children in autumn sunshine is certainly a most fitting monument to all those who gave, and still give, their tomorrows that we might have our todays. Securing and preserving Peace for all of God's creation (animal, vegetable and mineral) must remain foremost in our hearts and minds as we struggle through the troubled silences of our times.

God give you peace! (a Franciscan greeting and benediction)
Rev'd Tim Daplyn



ST PAUL'S, Walton in Gordano

Ode to the Snow-drop
The Snow-drop, Winter's timid child,
Awake to life, bedew'd with tears,
And flings around it's fragrance mild;
And where no rival flow'rets bloom,
Amid the bare and chilling gloom.
A beauteous gem appears!

An extract from 'Ode to a Snow-drop' by

Mary Robinson (1758-1800)

Looking out for the first snowdrops to be in flower is definitely something to cheer at this time of the year.

And as we begin a new year all of us here at St Paul's would like to send out our good wishes for the New Year, hoping for a Happy, Healthy, and Peaceful 2024 for us all.

We start this month's magazine with a letter from Graham Roberts:

Walton-in-Gordano and St Paul's Church

Where is the heart of Walton? That is a debatable question. Where would you hold that debate? There is no pub. There is no shop. The only two centres of social gathering are the village hall, and St Paul's church.

I am an outsider. I wasn't born in your village, nor do I reside in her, yet my heart is here, and I'll tell you why; God led me here. Ask me and I'll tell you about it. My unconditional necessity, especially since lock-down, is to be in Lord's house on the Lord's day. I was led, as sure as eggs is eggs, to St Paul's Church, which is YOUR church. It is now MY church, and it is so precious to me. Under the ministry of Noel and his dedicated team, as well as the lovely few faithful souls at St Paul's, I have been blessed.

I am aware of only one village resident who regularly attends St Paul's on a Sunday morning, yet occasional visitors sometimes get our 11.15am congregation dangerously near to double figures! Dizzy heights!

Our faithful few include those who were born in Walton, lived for a long time in Walton, or who have been adopted (like me) into a family that is spread out in an convenient straggle from the valley to the coast.

Now whether the shape of the village is to blame, the lack of parking, or just the nature of life's complexities, I don't know, but I do know that there is no guarantee that the gem that is St Paul's will survive the ravages of modern economics.

You know what's coming, don't you? But it isn't so! We aren't after your money. This isn't a church tower, or church roof, or church organ begging letter. But before I tell you what it is, let me tell you that St Paul's punches above her weight. Read what you will into that comment, but be assured, I am only interested in your eternal wellbeing.

There; I've let the cat out of the bag and divulged my true intentions.

I know that many of you go to other places of worship, which is why you don't

attend your local church. But St Paul's is running on fumes, not because you don't want to join us, but because you give glory to God elsewhere. It would be extremely sad if you lost your village church unexpectedly, so this is a heads-up that our tiny congregation is getting smaller and older.

My comments may elicit surprise from those of you who attend the special events at St Paul's, such as the recent Advent Carol Service and Christmas Fayre. Such occasions are extremely well supported, and it's always lovely to see you. But on bread and butter Sunday services (bread and wine actually) we huddle together at the front of the church on cosy, heated seats, and make a joyful noise to the Lord, for all of Walton.

And here's the news, on the first Sunday of every month, we have decided to include in our service special prayers for the whole village of Walton-in-Gordano.

You are cordially invited to join us for these, or any other of our services.

So that is what all my words have been leading to, an invitation. Come and see.

Come and hear. Come and be blessed.

God bless you, as I have been. Graham!

Thank you, Graham and how right you are, including about how well supported events are here at Walton. Looking back to our Advent Carol Service and Christmas Fayre – how wonderfully well attended they both were. Thank you to Noel for taking the service and to Sue for picking a lovely mix of Advent hymns and carols. And then straight into the Christmas Fayre, Brodie was up out of her pew to do the Tombola, Celia and Graham to do the Bric-a-Brac stall and Maureen to look after the cakes and pickles. Sue fired up the frying pan and the delicious smell of frying bacon and sausages soon was wafting around the church. Graham R was back and forward carrying piping hot sausage baps, while also asking us to guess the weight of a Christmas cake, and June was getting us to decide the date of Father Christmas's birthday. Emma was busy selling raffle tickets, Deb and Sandra (despite having left her hearing aid at home) were taking orders and handing out teas and coffees, and Jo was encouraging us to have a turn at stirring the Christmas pudding and make a wish – I had a go with Brea my great niece, Sue's precious little granddaughter. Well done to everyone for their hard work. And thank you to Jenny, a friend of Sandra's, who played the organ to everyone's delight during the Fayre. There were rumours of a fix when I won not only a raffle prize but also the Santa's Sack prize for correctly guessing Father Christmas's birthday – could it ever have been any date other than Christmas Day. Glynis won 'Guess the Weight of the Cake' – which weighed two pounds, five and a half ounces. Thank you to all of you

involvement with the children of our parish; it is a privilege for us to be responsible for gently introducing the youngsters to Biblical stories, sometimes with the use of puppets, as well as watching them grow in readiness for the time they start to go to school. I regard them, along with the congregations of all of our Churches, as an extension of my own family. Together with Sally King, I also participate in the Christmas Eve Crib Service at St. Mary's, with puppetry, making Christingles and as a general helper. I have, in the past, introduced other churches to the puppetry ministry (St. Peter & St. Paul and St. Quiricus & St. Julietta) and performed with my late Bob at Hope in the Square in Clevedon. I am still prepared to use this ministry within the town should the occasion and/or need arise. In addition, I make bereavement & best-wishes cards for use by All Saints and St. Mary's, and I collect the pew sheets for St. Mary's every Friday. I believe very strongly in teamwork and feel this is important within our church ministry as well as beyond the Benefice.

Stepping Stones 'Living with Loss'

Drop in support in times of change or bereavement

OPEN DOOR – DROP IN

**2 – 4pm on the first Friday of each month
at St Mary's Church Hall**

Next meetings: 5th Jan, 2nd Feb, 1st March

Tea always available!

Members of the team are able to give information
and one-to-one support if wished.

For further information: Ruth Maddock 01275 870751 /

Email: ruthmaddock@gmail.com



What is your “Ministry”?

Christine Sutton – Walton St. Mary

A bit about me and what brought me to the Benefice

Having formerly worshipped at Christchurch (following the amalgamation with Linden Road Methodist Church), my late husband, Bob and I found the style of worship becoming a little too modern for our tastes and so found ourselves at St. Mary's one Palm Sunday several years ago. Thereafter we became active members of the congregation at Walton. We both appreciated the style and format of worship at the church and so we remained from that time onwards. Indeed, Bob's ashes rest comfortably in the churchyard in a plot intended for us both. Since Bob's death in 2015, I have been blessed with my beloved pet dog, Bessie. She has become my constant companion (my angel on four paws) and loves nothing more than joining me at church whenever circumstances allow. She is an honorary member of our Little Saints Mother & Toddler Group and loves to interact with the children whenever she can.

My role within the Benefice

My role within the church has evolved somewhat, encompassing activities within the benefice as a whole at the present time. I first started as a church welcomer and also took my part on the tea & coffee rota. I became Church meeting secretary for a few years and took on the duties of one of the flower arrangers. I also participated in one of the Benefice working groups. Furthermore, I did undertake pastoral visiting for a while, taking (pre-Blessed) Eucharist to people unable to worship in church. Since that time, I was invited to give a testimony, of how I came to my faith, in front of the congregation at St. Mary's. It was somewhat daunting but also a comforting relief in a strange way – no holds barred, warts & all! Now, I have a handful of main roles, specifically that of acolyte & altar server (which also involves co-ordinating the altar servers' rota and attendance at funerals), I am a chorister and very much enjoy the uplifting feeling of singing with our lovely choir under the direction of the Rev. Ian Hubbard. I am still a flower arranger at St. Mary's and I am involved with children's ministry in various ways. I am part of the team running our Little Saints group and, before Covid affected us all, I did co-ordinate the rota before Kate Hector took over post-lockdown. I relish my

who came along, there was a wonderful atmosphere, and everyone has been saying what a lovely time they had. And thank you for your generosity, an amazing £755.37 was raised, Sue says this must be a record amount for a Christmas Fayre. And at the time of writing £50 had come from the Village Post Box – this will go to UNICEF to help them as they support mums and little newborn babies around the world. The collection from the Carol Service will also go this worthy cause. Twenty-two selection boxes were gifted to go the Clevedon Food Bank for local children, they were all the same make, it looked like the Christmas Fayre had been sponsored by Cadburys. The Fayre was rounded off nicely with everyone singing Happy Birthday, Happy 80th Birthday, to Celia.

While the Christmas Fayre was in progress Kevin was busy replacing the notice board by the road, the old one had been reversed into by a van and was looking rather tatty and was only held together by the poster. Thank you, Anne for the donation of the new board which she has given in memory of Colin – and thank you to Kevin for making such a good job of doing the installation.

As I'm writing this, we are still looking forward to the Christmas Quiz, Christmas Lunch and the Carol Service.

But now let's move on to this month. Emma and Kevin begin their joint role as treasurer, thank you to you both for taking this on.

The Welcome In Coffee Morning is back and will be on Saturday 6th January at 10.30am in the church. Come along and enjoy some cake and a cup of tea and take the opportunity to catch up on all the village news.

On the following day, Sunday 7th at 11.15am, we have our Morning Gathering to mark Epiphany, a simple service, this month led by Graham R and other members of the congregation and including prayers for our whole community.

The next weekend we have the Walton Wassailing on Saturday 13th January starting at 6.30pm at the Village Pound Garden. An evening of singing traditional country songs as the apple trees are blessed for the new year.

On Sunday 14th, at 11.15am, we have this month's Holy Communion service.

Then on Sunday 21st January we have our Plough Sunday service at 11.15am. The first in our cycle of traditional rural celebrations where the plough is blessed as we begin to consider the crops for the coming year, whether as farmers or in our own gardens – yes get out those heaps of seed catalogues, make a cup of tea and start that planning.

The final Sunday this month is an easy to approach Morning Prayer service, also at 11.15am.

A quick look forward to February. The Welcome In is on Saturday 3rd, 10.30am in the church, and our Morning Gathering at 11.15am, our service led by the congregation, is on Sunday 4th at 11.15am.

And looking even further ahead we have a new venture – the Walton-in-Gordano Country Market on Saturday 9th March at 10am in the Village Hall. All sorts of different stalls and refreshments. And there is still time to book a stall, contact Emma at waltonchronicle@gmail.com

Did you know that nationally we haven't had a Day of Prayer for Peace since 1947. So back before Christmas we had a special service doing exactly that, reflecting the calls of so many globally, and praying for a cessation of warfare, violence and strife in the world. And in response to our collection for the children of Gaza we have received a poignant thank you letter from the Lighthouse School in Gaza, please read it, it is on the table at the back of the church. To look into the faces of these children is to see the desperate need for peace.

How about carrying on this idea and having services with a dedicated theme for prayer – maybe praying for the environment or the vulnerable people in our society or perhaps there is something that is close to your heart that you feel needs to be voiced in prayer. Have a think about it.

Reflecting on Graham's letter and on Noel's sermon from our Advent Carol service where he spoke about finding God in our lives, being aware of God's presence, made me think about how even our little church can act as a conduit for the guiding hand of God in our lives. In particular it made me think of our dear, much missed, friend Gordon Lawrence. Never could he have thought that the simple act of kindness when he accepted the call to be Father Christmas at our annual Christmas Fayre would lead him to go on to be one of a band of Santa's at Cadbury Garden Centre and eventually to take on the organisation as well, and that by bringing the idea of Christmas Shoe Boxes for vulnerable children abroad to our community that he would end up with an organisational role in that as well. All this brought joy to Gordon, putting his many talents to good use, and reached out God's supporting love to so many. That is truly finding God in a life here in the heart of our St Paul's family.



And finally, our Mouse Musings: 'Here we come a-wassailing
among the leaves so green; here we come a-wand'ring so fair to
be seen. Love and joy come to you, and to you your wassail too;
and God bless you and send you a Happy New Year, and God send
you a Happy New Year.'

Love Miss CM

Diocese News



The Souls of our Shoes

An exhibition by the Mothers' Union has been on display in Wells Cathedral, and at November's Diocesan Synod, to draw attention to the issue of domestic violence. It features shoes of all different styles, sizes, and colours along with a comment from those who have walked away from abuse and those who have journeyed with them.

Created by the Mothers' Union in Scotland, it is an extension of the Union's initiatives to highlight abuse, and the practical and prayerful support that is offered to families. It is hoped it can "provide a reminder that with timely help, many can escape from their abusive situations, rebuild their confidence and live in safety."

Good global neighbours

Pupils at St Bartholomew's CE Primary School have been presented with a Bronze Award from Christian Aid's Global Neighbours Scheme for their global citizenship work. From creating bee gardens, sending water purifying materials to Morocco to toilet twinning, pupils and staff at this wonderful Crewkerne primary school have been working hard to take their place as compassionate global citizens.

Sustainable flowers

More than 40 church flower arrangers from 15 churches attended St James' in Taunton to learn how to arrange flowers in a more environmentally-friendly way. Research suggests that traditional floral foam, also known as oasis, is non-recyclable and contains the same amount of plastic as 10 plastic shopping bags.

Angie Blackwell of Cottage Flowers, Ilminster shared her alternatives and Lyn from St James' said, "Angie shared lots of hints and tips... I for one certainly came away more confident in moving away from using floral foam and have taken another step toward an eco-friendlier ministry in flowers."